

Important Announcement Concerning Statutory Changes to RN Licensure by Endorsement in Georgia

During the 2008 session of the Georgia legislature, a bill was passed that requires all applicants for licensure by endorsement to have graduated from a nursing education program approved by the Georgia Board of Nursing or which meets criteria similar to, and not less stringent, than those established by the Board. This bill went into effect on July 1, 2008 and is codified in O.C.G.A. §43-26-7(c).

The Board takes seriously its duty to protect the public health, safety and welfare and the duty to ensure that nursing curricula should meet stringent, board-approved standards required by the recent changes in the law. Applicants for licensure by endorsement must graduate from schools whose curricula are no less stringent than those standards established by the Board. The Board is not unsympathetic to the plight of the students who have been adversely affected by this new law, but the Board has a duty to uphold the law and is currently doing so.

The Board has established rules that state the requirements for board-approval for nursing education programs. These rules can be found on the web here (See Chapter 410-3, Nursing Education Programs): http://rules.sos.state.ga.us/cgi-bin/page.cgi?g=GEORGIA_BOARD_OF_NURSING%2FNURSING_EDUCATION_PROGRAMS%2Findex.html&d=1 The Board may waive rules, but only when doing so will not contradict the law. If the Board waived a rule so that applicants whose education did not meet board criteria are issued a license, the Board would be breaking the law and endangering the public's health, safety and welfare. The Board has a mandated duty to protect the public under O.C.G.A. § 43-26-2, which states, "The purpose of this article is to protect, promote, and preserve the public health, safety, and welfare through legislative regulation and control of registered professional nursing education and practice. **This article ensures that any person practicing or offering to practice nursing or using the title registered professional nurse, as defined, within the State of Georgia, shall be licensed as provided in this article.**" (Emphasis added.)